

## SSUDAC Meeting Summary May 16, 2013

**Members Present:** Ernest Bland, Jessica Evans, Dan Figueroa, Thomas Kaufman, Ed Levy, Jon Lourie, Melvin Tull

**Members Absent:** Carmen Camacho, Don Hague

### **Call to Order and Introductions:**

- Mr. Ernest Bland, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:29 p.m.

### **Reports:**

#### **Police Briefing & Crime Report**

Lt. Elizabeth Hattenburg, 3<sup>rd</sup> Police Precinct

- Lt. Hattenburg reported that during Pedestrian Safety Awareness Week in Silver Spring, police wrote 61 tickets, mostly issued to motorists. She mentioned that many pedestrians had also been in violation of the law, but officers issued them a verbal warning versus tickets.
- Lt. Hattenburg shared details of an arrest made in Bethesda related to burglaries committed in the Silver Spring area.
- Lt. Hattenburg also noted that there would be a police presence in the Veterans Plaza area for the Telemundo event on Sunday, May 19th, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Mr. Ernest Bland, Chair, asked Lt. Hattenburg about the police "Click It or Ticket" seatbelt compliance program. Lt. Hattenburg informed that the program began on May 6<sup>th</sup> and would continue over the next three weeks. Police are currently ticketing in areas near Beltway entrance ramps.
- Lt. Hattenburg mentioned that due to the warmer weather, police are running an overtime group near Montgomery Blair High School to ensure that students attend afternoon classes.

#### **Urban District Report**

Ms. Yvette Freeman, Chief of Operations, Silver Spring Urban District

- Ms. Freeman reported that large graffiti tags have been painted in the Georgia Ave. CSX tunnel. The SSUD paints over the graffiti when they have the appropriate paint colors available. SSUD management has also been coordinating efforts with Arts on the Block to restore damaged tile and refurbish the art work in the tunnel. Additionally, Urban District staff met with CSX staff to inspect and note stress and damage to the tunnel structure.

- Ms. Freeman recently met with a Department of Transportation (DOT) staff and the Bikeshare contractor for an onsite review of approximately a dozen Bikeshare stations that will be available in late summer or early fall 2013. Stations are located adjacent to United Therapeutics, Downtown Silver Spring and Montgomery College, among other prime locations. Stations will be evenly distributed within the central business district and bikes can be returned to any station, regardless of where the bike was picked up. Ms. Freeman said that she would reach out to DOT for an update on the Bikeshare program to be presented at an upcoming committee meeting.
- Ms. Freeman mentioned that Colesville Rd. is currently being repaved. Work is also being done to repair other minor street hazards in downtown Silver Spring.
- Committee member Jon Lourie asked where people should focus their efforts in getting roadway repair issues resolved. Mr. Reemberto Rodriguez mentioned that potholes should be reported to the State Highway Administration (SHA). Rick Siebert and Yvette Freeman both mentioned that there is a new Department of Permitting Services inspector. Ms. Freeman will be following up with her regarding a number of these issues. Mr. Bland stated that he would like to hear from a SHA rep at the next committee meeting.

#### Silver Spring Regional Area Director's Report

Mr. Reemberto Rodriguez, Director, Silver Spring Regional Center

- Mr. Rodriguez briefly mentioned the Silver Spring Urban District's email address, [silverspringud@gmail.com](mailto:silverspringud@gmail.com), which should be used to report street and sidewalk issues and to catalogue photos. Mr. Rodriguez emphasized the long-term construction taking place in the downtown area and the challenges that these projects present.
- Mr. Rodriguez gave a brief overview of events taking place in the area, emphasizing that art and entertainment activities in the downtown area are increasing.
- Committee member Jon Lourie asked about the status of the Studio Arts building submission. Mr. Rodriguez replied that it would be discussed in the next 30 days.

#### Parking Lot District Update

Rick Siebert, Director, Silver Spring Parking Lot District

- Mr. Siebert briefly discussed the Parking Lot District's budget, noting that it was in such good shape that there will be no change in parking rates, hours of collection or other operating aspects of the Silver Spring Parking District in the coming fiscal year due to funding reserves. He

encouraged the committee to lobby the County Council now for FY15 funds.

- Mr. Ernest Bland shared the letter that he had written to Transportation Committee Councilmember Roger Berliner opposing the recommendation to reduce the Silver Spring Parking Lot District tax rate.
- Committee member Mel Tull asked about funds for maintenance of older garages and whether any of the County garages would be sold. Mr. Siebert replied that the Parking Lot District is currently spending roughly \$2.5 million per year on garage maintenance. Work has recently been done on both the Bonifant St. and Dixon Ave. garages. Mr. Siebert mentioned that the Dixon Ave. garage will be reopening in one month. He also reported that the County is selling the Spring St. & Colesville Rd. garage to United Therapeutics.
- Committee member Jon Lourie inquired about the status of Parking Garage #4 (located near Fenton St. & Sligo Ave.). Mr. Siebert replied that it is an excellent site for redevelopment, and that an engineering study is currently underway. He also stated that there had not been much developer interest, and noted there is currently a development project in progress near the garage site.
- A request for proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment of the Mid-County Regional Services site, parking lot #13, parking lot #34 (within the block of Reddie Dr., Veirs Mill Rd., Georgia Ave. and University Blvd.) in Wheaton and 8787 Georgia Ave. in Silver Spring is in process and expected to be released on 5/31/13.

#### New Business

- Ms. Jane Reddicker of the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce updated the committee on the successful Council vote to lower the commercial and residential energy tax by 10% next year.
- Mr. Bland proposed a motion to approve last month's meeting summary (for the record). Mel Tull seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.
- Committee member Jon Lourie proposed a motion to write a letter to the County Council regarding various concerns about the RFP for the combination Wheaton & Silver Spring redevelopment areas mentioned by Rick Siebert. Mel Tull seconded and the motion was carried unanimously.

#### Ellsworth Place Presentation (Currently City Place)

Mr. Gus Bauman, Petrie Ross Ventures

Mr. Gus Bauman and his associates presented the redevelopment plans for City Place Mall.

- The general overview of the design emphasizes an increased focus on pedestrian foot traffic in the area, as well as changes to the interior, and transitioning from an art deco style to an industrial design.
- Prospective retailers for the redevelopment are still being negotiated. Burlington Coat Factory and Marshalls will remain in the building. The restaurants McGinty's, Chipotle and The Blue Pearl will receive updated signage and remain in their current locations along Ellsworth Dr. The developers are seeking to replace the Galaxy Billiards Café.
- A new Jumbotron screen is proposed for the outside of the building along Fenton St. & Ellsworth Dr.
- The Hecht's building located within the development site is a historically significant structure. The developers are working with the historical society to meet requirements for development in that location.
- The current structure will retain its existing nine floors. The number of entrances will be increased to five. A coffee bar and general seating area is proposed to occupy the current food court on level one.
- Mr. Bland asked about changes or improvements to the elevators within the building to improve access for persons with disabilities. The presenters said that they would make repairs and refurbish the existing elevators.
- A restaurant (currently unspecified) with outdoor seating is proposed for a portion of Fenton St. near Colesville Rd. Due to a nuisance with bird droppings, there is a recommendation to replace the existing trees along Fenton St.
- Committee members raised concerns regarding existing bus shelters along Fenton St., as well as refurbishment of the sidewalk considering the proposed restaurant at the corner of Colesville Rd. & Fenton St. The presenters responded that they would address the issues once they knew how much outdoor seating the restaurant would be requesting.
- Mr. Bauman stated that construction is currently planned to begin at the end of 2013.
- The presenters noted that they did not have a final plan for the building's retail layout, as they are currently in negotiations with the Mall's current tenants.
- Mr. Bauman mentioned that his group was seeking the Advisory Committee's support with regard to the County Executive, County Council and Historical Society. He indicated that they would return to the committee for letters of support once more details were finalized.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:29 p.m.